

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim 1. (currently amended) A valve assembly for controlling the flow of granular material in a closed application system, said valve assembly comprising a first valve component, a second valve component mounted to said first valve component, means for rotating said first valve component relative to said second valve component along a single, common plane for selectively moving said valve assembly between a closed position and an opened position; means for resiliently biasing said valve assembly in the said closed position; a guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components, said guide element comprising means for guiding said valve assembly into retaining means for said valve assembly; and means for removably mounting said valve assembly to a discharge nozzle of a container for providing a closed flow path for said granular material between said container and said valve assembly.

Claim 2. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 41 wherein said valve assembly is removably mountable to said discharge nozzle of said container such that said container and said first valve component are conjointly rotatable relative to said second valve component.

Claim 3. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 2 wherein said guide element is adapted to be received in said retaining means for retaining said second valve

component fixedly positioned relative to said first valve component, such that rotation of said first valve component relative to said second valve component moves said valve assembly between said closed and opened positions.

Claim 4. (currently amended) A valve assembly in combination with a product receptacle in a closed application system, said valve assembly comprising a first valve component, a second valve component mounted to said first valve component, means for rotating said first valve component relative to said second valve component for selectively moving said valve assembly between a closed position and an opened position; means for resiliently biasing said valve assembly in said closed position; a guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components, said guide element comprising means for guiding said valve assembly into retaining means for said valve assembly; and means for removably mounting said valve assembly to a discharge nozzle of a product container for providing a closed flow path between said product container and said valve assembly; said product receptacle defining an inlet opening having a collar fixedly mounted therein; said collar adapted to receive therein said guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components for fixedly retaining said one of said first and second valve components in said collar; and means for removably coupling said valve assembly to said collar such that said valve assembly is removable from said collar only when said valve assembly is in said closed position, ~~The valve assembly as~~

~~claimed in Claim 41~~ wherein said first valve component has a top surface defining at least one opening therein; said second valve component has a top surface defining at least one opening therein; said openings in said top surfaces of said first and second valve components being selectively movable into and out of alignment as said first and second valve components are rotated relative to each other for moving said valve assembly between said closed and opened positions.

Claim 5. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 4 wherein said first and second valve components are arranged in said valve assembly such that at least one slot is defined proximate to the top of said second valve component when said first and second valve components are rotatably mounted to each other; and stop means operatively associated with said slot to limit relative rotation of said first and second valve components.

Claim 6. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 5 wherein said slot is defined such that the length thereof limits maximum relative rotation of said first and second valve components to a fully opened position in which said openings in said top surfaces of said first and second valve components are in complete alignment in a first rotational direction, and limits maximum relative rotation of said first and second valve components to a fully closed position in which said openings in said top surfaces of said first and second valve

components are completely out of alignment in a second rotational direction opposite to said first rotational direction.

Claim 7. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 5 wherein said stop means includes an element carried by said first valve component and rotatable therewith, at least a portion of said element being received in said slot.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 7 wherein said element further provides retaining means for securing said second valve component mounted to said first valve component for preventing linear displacement of said second valve component relative to said first valve component.

Claim 9. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 41 wherein said first valve component comprises a flange portion and a hub portion extending from said flange portion, said hub portion being narrower than said flange portion.

Claim 10. (currently amended) A valve assembly in combination with a product receptacle in a closed application system, said valve assembly comprising a first valve component, a second valve component mounted to said first valve component, means for rotating said first valve component relative to said second valve component for selectively moving said valve assembly

between a closed position and an opened position; means for resiliently biasing said valve assembly in said closed position; a guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components, said guide element comprising means for guiding said valve assembly into retaining means for said valve assembly; and means for removably mounting said valve assembly to a discharge nozzle of a product container for providing a closed flow path between said product container and said valve assembly; said product receptacle defining an inlet opening having a collar fixedly mounted therein; said collar adapted to receive therein said guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components for fixedly retaining said one of said first and second valve components in said collar; and means for removably coupling said valve assembly to said collar such that said valve assembly is removable from said collar only when said valve assembly is in said closed position,

wherein said valve component comprises a flange portion and a hub portion extending from said flange portion, said hub portion being narrower than said flange portion, and ~~The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 9~~ wherein said second valve component is adapted to be mounted over said hub portion of said first valve component.

Claim 11. (previously presented) The valve assembly as claimed in Claim 10 wherein said second valve component has at least one rib extending from the outer surface thereof.

Claim 12. (previously presented) A container comprising at least a partially hollow housing, said housing having a top surface, a bottom surface, a sidewall between said top and bottom surfaces, and at least one handle defined in said sidewall, said container defining a discharge nozzle, said discharge nozzle defining a discharge opening extending upwardly from substantially the center of said top surface, said discharge nozzle including means for removably mounting a valve assembly over said discharge opening; said container including at least one tab extending upwardly from the top surface thereof.

Claim 13. (cancelled)

Claim 14. (cancelled)

Claim 15. (currently amended) A closed application system for transferring product between a product container and a product receptacle, said system comprising:

a product container having a discharge opening, and a valve assembly mountable over said discharge opening;

said valve assembly comprising first and second valve components mounted for selective rotation relative to each other in first and second predetermined directions along a single, common plane for moving said valve assembly between closed and opened positions;

means for resiliently biasing said valve assembly into said closed position;

said valve assembly being mountable to said product container such that said first valve component is conjointly rotatable with said product container relative to said second valve component;

said valve assembly including a guide element extending from one of said first and second valve components;

a product receptacle, said receptacle defining an inlet opening having a collar fixedly mounted therein;

said collar adapted to receive therein said guide element extending from said valve assembly mounted to said product container for fixedly retaining said second valve component in said collar such that conjoint rotation of said product container and said first valve component relative to said second valve component and said collar of said product receptacle moves said valve assembly between said closed and opened positions for providing a closed flow path of said product between said product container and said product receptacle through said valve assembly.

Claim 16. (cancelled)

Claim 17. (cancelled)

Claim 18. (cancelled)

Claim 19. (cancelled)

Claim 20. (cancelled)

Claim 21. (cancelled)

Claim 22. (cancelled)

Claim 23. (cancelled)

Claim 24. (cancelled)

Claim 25. (cancelled)

Claim 26. (cancelled)

Claim 27. (cancelled)

Claim 28. (cancelled)

Claim 29. (cancelled)

Claim 30. (cancelled)

Claim 31. (cancelled)

Claim 32. (cancelled)

Claim 33. (cancelled)

Claim 34. (cancelled)

Claim 35. (cancelled)

Claim 36. (cancelled)

Claim 37. (cancelled)

Claim 38. (cancelled)

Claim 39. (cancelled)

Claim 40. (cancelled)

Claim 41. (currently amended) A valve assembly in combination with a product receptacle in a closed application system, said valve assembly comprising a first valve component, a second valve component mounted to said first valve component, means for rotating said first valve component relative to said second valve component along a single, common plane for selectively moving said valve assembly between a closed position

and an opened position; means for resiliently biasing said valve assembly in said closed position; a guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components, said guide element comprising means for guiding said valve assembly into retaining means for said valve assembly; and means for removably mounting said valve assembly to a discharge nozzle of a product container for providing a closed flow path between said product container and said valve assembly; said product receptacle defining an inlet opening having a collar fixedly mounted therein; said collar adapted to receive therein said guide element extending from one of the first and second valve components for fixedly retaining said one of said first and second valve components in said collar; and means for removably coupling said valve assembly to said collar such that said valve assembly is removable from said collar only when said valve assembly is in said closed position.

Claim 42. (currently amended) A closed application system for transferring product between a product container and a product receptacle, said system comprising:

a product container having a discharge opening, and a valve assembly mountable over said discharge opening;

said valve assembly comprising first and second valve components mounted for selective rotation relative to each other

in first and second predetermined directions for moving said valve assembly between closed and opened positions;

means for resiliently biasing said valve assembly into said closed position;

said valve assembly being mountable to said product container such that said first valve component is conjointly rotatable with said product container relative to said second valve component;

said valve assembly including a guide element extending from one of said first and second valve components;

a product receptacle, said receptacle defining an inlet opening having a collar fixedly mounted therein;

said collar adapted to receive therein said guide element extending from said valve assembly mounted to said product container for fixedly retaining said second valve component in said collar such that conjoint rotation of said product container and said first valve component relative to said second valve component and said collar of said product receptacle moves said valve assembly between said closed and opened positions for providing a closed flow path of said product between said product container and said product receptacle through said valve assembly, ~~The system as claimed in Claim 15~~ wherein said valve

assembly includes an element rotatable with one of said first and second valve components,

said valve assembly and said collar mounted in said product receptacle being operatively associated such that said element engages a lower surface of said collar to prevent removal of said valve assembly from said collar unless said valve assembly is in said closed position.

Claim 43. (previously presented) The system as claimed in Claim 15 wherein said valve assembly includes an element rotatable with one of said first and second valve components,

said collar mounted in said product receptacle having a channel therein for receiving said element;

said valve assembly and said collar being operatively associated such that said element is received in said channel in said collar to prevent removal of said valve assembly from said collar unless said valve assembly is in said closed position.

Claim 44. (previously presented) The system as claimed in Claim 42 wherein said element comprises a stop for limiting relative rotation between said first and second valve components.

Claim 45. (previously presented) The system as claimed in Claim 43 wherein said element comprises a stop for limiting relative rotation between said first and second valve components.

Claim 46. (previously presented) The system as claimed in Claim 44 wherein said first valve component has a first opening defined therein, said second valve component has a first opening defined therein, and said valve assembly is in said closed position when said openings in said first and second valve components are relatively rotated out of alignment with each other.

Claim 47. (previously presented) The system as claimed in Claim 45 wherein said first valve component has a first opening defined therein, said second valve component has a first opening defined therein, and said valve assembly is in said closed position when said openings in said first and second valve components are relatively rotated out of alignment with each other.

Claim 48. (currently amended) A method of dispersing product from a product container through a valve assembly and into a product receptacle in a closed application system, the steps of said method comprising:

rotating a product container relative to a valve assembly along a single, common plane to move said valve assembly between opened and closed positions;

resiliently biasing said valve assembly into said closed position, and

locking said valve assembly to a product receptacle when said valve assembly is in said opened position.

Claim 49. (currently amended) A method of dispersing product from a product container through a valve assembly and into a product receptacle in a closed application system, the steps of said method comprising:

rotating a product container relative to a valve assembly to move said valve assembly between opened and closed positions;

resiliently biasing said valve assembly into said closed position, and

locking said valve assembly to a product receptacle when said valve assembly is in said opened position,

~~The method as claimed in Claim 48~~ wherein said product receptacle includes a collar mounted proximate to an inlet thereof, and said valve assembly includes an element rotatable

therewith; the step of locking said valve assembly to said product receptacle including the step of rotating said valve assembly relative to said product container such that said element rotatable with said valve assembly engages a lower surface of said collar to prevent removal of said valve assembly from said collar when said valve assembly is in said opened position.

Claim 50. (currently amended) A method of dispersing product from a product container through a valve assembly and into a product receptacle in a closed application system, the steps of said method comprising:

rotating a product container relative to a valve assembly to move said valve assembly between opened and closed positions;

resiliently biasing said valve assembly into said closed position, and

locking said valve assembly to a product receptacle when said valve assembly is in said opened position,

~~The method as claimed in Claim 48~~ wherein said product receptacle includes a collar mounted proximate to an inlet thereof, said collar defining a channel therein, and said valve assembly includes an element rotatable therewith; the step of locking said valve assembly to said product receptacle including

the step of rotating said valve assembly relative to said product container such that said element rotatable with said valve assembly is received in said channel defined in said collar to prevent removal of said valve assembly from said collar when said valve assembly is in said opened position.